



Translating Evidence to Support Transitions

School that Makes Sense Cent\$

Taking CTE Courses

Tip Sheet 16

Transitions to Adulthood Center for Research

September 2020

Career and Technical Education (or CTE) classes are a great way to learn skills for your future career. CTE is the practice of teaching career skills to students. A concentration of CTE courses is 4 classes that add up to prepare you for a particular career. If you take a concentration of CTE courses, you can graduate with special certifications that make you eligible to work in certain jobs, for example as a Certified Nursing Assistant or Auto Repair Technician. These certifications can help you get a head start on your college or career.



Which CTE focus is right for me?



Choosing a focus that matches your interests is important. Your school guidance counselor or transition planner can do activities with you to help you choose a concentration:

- Tell you about all of the different career paths and what types of classes you would take
- Complete a “career interest inventory” or other survey to think about careers that are a good fit for you
<https://www.rcsdk12.org/cms/lib/NY01001156/Centricity/Domain/4459/Career%20Interest%20Survey.pdf>
- Be sure that your career goal and the courses you will need get listed in your Graduation Plan, Individualized Learning Plan (ILP) or Individualized Education Program (IEP)

It's okay if you change your mind!

It's okay if you learn that the first concentration you try is not the direction you want to go with your career. For example, you may have thought you wanted to go into fashion design; but, during the first course of sewing realize this concentration is not for you. That's okay. You have learned something about yourself and can check that career off your list.

Why now?

Right now your focus may be on finishing high school. But, taking CTE classes can be one of the best ways to be sure that what you are doing while you're in high school is useful for your future. Whether you're interested in getting a job right after school or going to college, CTE classes can help you shape a better future.

Sometimes I need extra Help. Can I take CTE classes?



CTE classes are for ALL students. If you have accommodations that are listed in your IEP, 504 Plan, or behavior plan, those can be used in your CTE class, too. It will be important for your CTE teacher to know what those accommodations are. Your teacher or guidance counselor should help you communicate with the CTE teacher about accommodations or other supports you need.

I need to take certain classes to graduate. Do I have time for CTE classes?



CTE courses are usually elective credits (not required courses) that count towards high school graduation. Some schools may allow certain CTE courses to substitute for other academic requirements for graduation. Meet with your counselor and explain your graduation and post-school plans. Ask for their help in determining how CTE courses can fit in those plans.

How's it going?

It will be important for you and your teacher or guidance counselor to keep track of how you're doing in CTE classes. If things are not going well, make some decisions.

- Do I not like this topic and should take a course in a different area in the future?
- Do I need more or different accommodations to help me succeed (e.g., a change in attendance policy, do I need the information presented in a different way)?
- Do my post-school goals for school and work need to change? Are the courses I'm taking helping me prepare for my goals?

Continue to meet with your IEP team each year and be sure that things are still on track – and make changes when needed.

RESOURCES

Incorporating Career and Technical Education in Transition Planning Practice Guide

<https://www.umassmed.edu/contentassets/7ffebeded6274601b3baa4de4a33b630/updated-test-guides/career-and-technical-education-pre-pub.pdf>

The 16 Career Clusters: Definitions and Guide

<https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/finding-a-job/what-are-the-career-clusters>

Career Clusters

<https://careertech.org/career-clusters>

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